Through all the Changing Scenes of Life

S. Baring Gould

S. Luke's Sunday School,

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.

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AWARDED TO

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THROUGH ALL THE CHANGING SCENES OF LIFE.

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CAPTAIN THOMAS AND MARTHA. *Page* 43.

THROUGH ALL THE CHANGING SCENES OF LIFE.

BY

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THROUGH ALL THE CHANGING SCENES OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE WRECK.

ON the north coast of Cornwall, exposed to every blast that blows from Labrador, upon a cliff that rises some three hundred feet above the ocean, crouches a substantial farm named Trenance. I do not mean to say that the sheer face of this cliff is three hundred feet from the boiling sea below—it is, in fact, one hundred feet—but from this abrupt edge the land rises another couple of hundred feet

rapidly into a bald head of furzy down strewn with sparry stones, so white that they might be mistaken for snowballs.

To the west of this cliff the land falls rapidly away into a tiny harbour of yellow sand, called Porth-Mawgan, where there is a coastguard station, but no other buildings.

This terrible coast rises as a wall of iron against all vessels that are driven by a west or north-west wind against it. There is nowhere a harbour of refuge, there is hardly a harbour at all for rough weather. Woe to the ship that runs for the only mouth that opens invitingly, the estuary of the Camel at Padstow. There, to all appearances, is a winding deep harbour sheltered from every gale; but, alas! in that treacherous mouth are sandbanks, and the boat that enters is caught as by fleshless gums and mumbled and chewed to fragments directly.

In still weather there is some chance of a

boat entering the many little creeks and bays, and landing or taking in a cargo, but only in still weather and when the wind is off shore.

Now, along this terrible coast there are certain headlands, and the land is scooped out between them. The vessel that in a gale comes within the line uniting these points is infallibly lost.

At the beginning of this century there lived in this old farm of Trenance a family of the name of Gilbert. It consisted of a fine old father, his son and daughter. The son was a model of a lusty Cornishman, stout of build, tall, ruddy with daily exposure to the wind from the sea, and tough as nails. His Christian name was Sampson. His sister, a handsome girl of one and twenty, was also tall, well built, and had, unlike her brother, dark hair and blue eyes, a combination rare, but beautiful; add to this that

she had one of the freshest of complexions, and one of the sweetest of dimples when she smiled. There was not a more charming girl on all that wild coast than Martha Gilbert.

A stormy November day. The wind raved and roared over the headland, flinging the waves so high that some of the foam was carried in broken drifts before the wind over the downs and splashed against the windows of the farm. Not so only, but the foam, beaten up into a sort of flummery against the rocks, sailed on the wind in flights and covered the fields so that they were as though strewn with masses of dissolving snow. The day had been so wild, the gale so strong, that nothing could be done out-of-doors, and the farm-labourers had been engaged in thrashing and making "reed" in the barn; that is, in thrashing out the long straw to serve for thatching.

The short November day had begun to close in when a man rushed into the barn with the shout that there was a ship on the rocks, and instantly flails and combs were thrown aside, and all the men, the old farmer Gilbert, his son, and the labourers, ran out upon the cliff to see.

The horizon had cleared; to the south-west the clouds had lifted. During the day there had been incessant driving rain in clouds that made it impossible for any one to see either out seaward or landward beyond a few yards. Now the rain had ceased, a colder current of air had curdled the vapours, and a film of light came over the leaden waters from where the sun was in decline. But the frenzy of the elements was not abated. Still the wind drove ashore with such violence that it was hard to stand against it, and still the waves were hurled with unslackened body and energy against the cliffs.

On this coast, almost everywhere, a covered way has with great labour been dug out near the edge of the cliffs; that is to say, a sunken road with a bank towards the sea that hugs the cliff and goes down to the beach, where there is one. It looks like a rampart of a fortification. But it is a rampart against the wind, and behind this bank some protection is afforded to those who would otherwise be blown off their feet. There can be little doubt, moreover, that these sunk ways were used in smuggling times for the conveyance of ran goods to the farmhouses, on the backs of donkeys, unperceived by the preventive men on shore or at sea.

Along such a covered way did the men from Trenance now push to the headland; on reaching which they looked forth over the tumultuous ocean. The air was not only salt with foam, but it shook and

quivered with the thunder of the waves. The mighty billows rolled on as though on wheels of inky blackness, dashed against the rocks, were in a moment shivered into a yeasty recoil of snowy foam and bubbling hills of lashed water, that in its recoil was buffeted by the next advancing mass of water from the Atlantic. The young farmer, Sampson Gilbert, raked the horizon with his eye and could see nothing—nothing save dancing waves and flakes of tossing foam. Then suddenly his father shouted, "She's under our very feet, Sam! under our very feet! Heaven help them."

The old man had thrown himself on his chest, and had crawled, snake-like, to the extreme edge of the precipice, and was looking over.

It was almost as he had said.

A vessel had been driven before the gale into the great bay that opened between

Trevose Head and Pentyre Point at Crantock. There was no bay to receive a ship and mumble it on sandbanks but to chew it with iron teeth. There was not a single possible harbour into which one so caught could run; nothing but upright cliffs, like walls of a city rising into the clouds. But though these cliffs are like towering walls, they have here and there at their bases fringes of sharp rocks, fangs on which to receive the victims of the sea. On such a fang, or rather wedged between two, was a barque, close under the precipitous cliffs of Trenance.

All the men now threw themselves down or went on one knee and leaned over to look. There was no danger in this, for the wind on shore was like a hand holding them back from falling over. The sight was a distressing one that met their eyes. The vessel was being simply rent and champed

to splinters by the waves: beaten by them as they came on, beaten by them as they recoiled. The crew were holding to the mast, they had much ado to maintain their hold in the swirl of water; at one moment they were submerged, at another their heads could be seen. Their condition was pitiable. Under a sheer precipice, on which was not a ledge where a man might set his foot, where there was not a path, not a stair in the rock by which any one might ascend. Apparently there was no hope for them. Of what avail for them to cling to the mast? As the barque broke up the mast would go, and then be driven with those hanging to it against the rocks, to beat their lives out of them, to be sucked back into the vortex and driven up again, till every hand was relaxed, and the mast itself was shivered like a match into splinters.

The old farmer stood up.

"My men," said he, "them poor chaps there must all go to kingdom come unless God and we help 'em. Run, you, Thomas and Nicolas Bolitho, and bring all the cart-ropes you can find; and you, Dick Cayzer, fetch here an iron bar. If them chaps is to be saved, it must be by us wi' the help o' God Almighty," and the old fellow raised his cap as he named the name of the Most High.

CHAPTER II.

THE CROWBAR.

IT is one of the most cruel things on this cruel coast that shipwrecked men perish within sight of the faces of those on the land, who would help them but cannot. It is a terrible distress to those on shore, who crowd to the edge of a cliff and look down on some vessel driven upon the rocks, to watch the waves beat man after man from the deck, and to be powerless to render assistance. For if the ship fall upon rocks at some little distance from the precipices, though by means of a rocket a rope may be cast to the boat, yet it is by no

means certain that by the aid of this rope the tops of the cliffs can be reached. There is a furiously boiling margin of water to be passed through where it rages among reefs sharp as razors, pointed as needles, on which the man battling through is thrown and cut or transfixed. He may be pulled up at last, but it is as a maimed and battered mass of dead flesh, bleeding and palpitating, but with the vital spirit pounded out of him.

In the case of the wreck that had occurred under Trenance Head there was this in its favour, that it was wedged among the rocks immediately under the cliff, so that a rope let down would actually fall upon the deck.

The case was extraordinary. It was extraordinary that the barque had been nipped just where she was; ten feet more and she would have been swept upon the cliff, and

would have been crushed to chips with one blow. Instead of that, she had been thrust into a fork of rock, that held her as in a vice, just short of the face of the precipice, and so far had preserved her. So far only, for every billow that beat on her was breaking her up, and it was but a matter of minutes, not of hours, before she went to pieces altogether. Those leaning over the edge could see the men below, how they held to the masts and bound themselves to them by cords; how they looked up at them pleadingly, and they shouted down to them to be of good cheer; but the furious wind drove their voices back in their faces, and every now and then a handful of salt spray was flung at them, and for a moment blinded their eyes.

"Halloo!"

Up came Thomas and Nicholas Bolitho with wain-ropes, and Dick Cayzer shouldering a crowbar.

"Have you given word to the maidens to have all ready?" asked the old farmer.

"Ay, master, they're getting beds prepared, and hot ale, and fires heaped up."

"Right enough. Now see what can be done."

There was but one thing that could be done—to drive the crowbar into the cliff turf at its edge, wind the cable round it, and let down one end weighted with a heavy stone.

A great piece of white spar was taken, so heavy that it required two men to lift it, and round this the end of the rope was looped and fastened firmly, then the crowbar was driven into the soil. The soil was shallow, so that it would not enter far. Consequently the bar could not be made sufficiently firm in the ground to stand any great strain. Sampson Gilbert went to it, and placed both his hands on the bar, and, leaning back, held it.

"Now then," said he, "down with the stone. You do your duty; I'll mind the bar."

The rope was passed in a clew about the iron, and the whole mass of spar descended. Heavy it was, and went down at first steadily, but as the rope lengthened it began to vibrate, the wind caught it, and swung it against the face of the cliff, a little lower, and it was caught by a wave and tossed like a cork.

Old Gilbert, leaning over the edge, observed its course, and turned now and then and called to the men to lower more cautiously, or to suspend operations. He was afraid of the rope being swung across sharp edges of slate rock which might cut it; afraid lest the wave should relax the knot about the stone and release it. The men lowering must also seize their opportunity, and run out the rope when the drop was clear of waves, so that

the wrecked men might be able to lay hold of it. For some time it seemed as though the stone would not go within their reach. It swung like a pendulum.

"Hold hard!" shouted Gilbert.

The level of the boat's deck had been reached, but the stone had not as yet touched the vessel. Indeed, it fell short of it.

A great billow beat in, and the stone disappeared in its bosom, but the weight of water dragged at the rope as though a giant hand were plucking at it to tear it away from the hold above. Then the wave rolled back and carried rope and stone with it past the vessel, without touching it, then suddenly relaxed its hold, or rather passed beyond the distance to which the rope would allow the stone to be carried, and the spar swung back in the air, struck the bulwark of the ship, rebounded, and

dashed forward and rammed against the face of the cliff.

"Next time!" shouted old Gilbert, "that is if she holds so long."

Again a wave surged in, overwhelmed the vessel, caught and submerged the stone, recoiled as before, carrying the stone with it. "Let go!" And the stone came bounding back through the air. Gilbert was right. This time it hit the deck, and he could see the sailors fall on it, and arrest it from being carried over the bulwarks. They proceeded to attach the end of the rope to the mast.

"Now then, Sam!" said the old farmer, "all depends on you."

"Not all, father, but a good deal."

"True you are, boy," said Gilbert. "Look y' here, my lads. Them chaps 'll have to come up the rope. They'll come like monkeys. But it don't belong altogether to their swarm-

ing. Fasten round the crow, and Sam 'll throw his whole weight on that. You hold him, one 'ahind the 'tother. If the crow gives way, there's good-bye to my Sam, as well as to the sailors. Now, be y' all ready?"

"Right, maister!"

"Very well. Mind, all belongs to each. If one gives way, it's a bad job for the rest."

If the hill slope had fallen inland from the edge of the cliff, there would have been less danger, but as it rose rapidly—in a few yards running up two hundred feet—the position was perilous. It was like men standing on the steep slope of a roof to haul up men at the bottom of the wall overtopped by the eaves of that roof.

"Ready now?" shouted Gilbert again, looking back over his shoulder. "A little

'un to begin wi', and try your powers. Now, my hearties!"

Sampson felt the tug at the bar under his hands. Cayzer had his arms about Sampson's waist. Tom Bolitho in like manner held Cayzer, and so in the same manner did Nicolas hold his brother Tom, and so one behind another, forming a chain. The grass was slippery with foam and rain, but the men's boots had nails in them, and they ground their ironshod heels into the turf, and threw their weight upon their heels.

"Right you are, my twopenny!" shouted old Gilbert, jumping to his knees, holding to a tuft of heather with one hand, and with the other assisting a boy to surmount the crumbling edge of the turf, and land him on the top.

"That's brave," said the old man heartily; "shake hands and get along wi' y' yonder where there's fire and hot stuff."

"Thank y'," said the boy just rescued. "I'd rayther stay and see my mates saved first."

"Right you are, young chap. Now then, Sam! there's another coming."

CHAPTER III.

A FIRST DUTY.

ONE by one the sailors reached the top of the cliff. There were four of them besides the boy and the captain, who was the last to leave the wreck, and who left as it went to pieces under his feet. He was a tall, fine man, with a weather-beaten face.

When he reached the top, he said nothing in acknowledgment of the efforts made for saving him, but followed in the direction of Trenance. The little farm has already been mentioned as crouching behind the cliff. It was, in fact, a low building with the slate

roofs reaching almost to the ground. The back was towards the sea and the western gales, it faced inland and south, looking into a walled courtyard, where was a pleasant flower bed, and against the side of the house some creepers clung to the wall, and in its shelter flowered profusely.

Into this little yard the eyes of the house were turned, and here it was that old Mrs. Gilbert, in her declining health, had sat and basked in the sun, sheltered from the strong breezes off the sea.

The farm kitchen opened into this courtyard by a door into a porch, and it was through this sheltering porch that the shipwrecked men were introduced into the house.

There everything was ready to receive them; a faggot of wood had been thrown into the great fireplace, and the fire roared in a sheet of flame up the chimney, painting walls and ceiling orange with its reflection.

On the long kitchen table were steaming jugs of hot drink and dishes piled up with food of every sort.

But what was almost as cheering to the eye as the glowing hearth and the well-spread board, were the bright and welcoming faces of Martha Gilbert and the maid-servants, who had done their best for the poor men, and whose hearts were beating with gladness at the thought that these sailors had been plucked from the jaws of death, and were alive and there to enjoy the good things prepared for them.

"Now," said old Gilbert, "you fellows are all streaming wet, and not only will you puddle my kitchen floor and give the maids a do to sop it all up, but I reckon you can't get proper comfort out of the fire nor enjoyment out of a supper. So first of all upstairs every one of you, and Sampson and I can fit you out in some of our clothes. When

you are dry and rigged out afresh, then is the time for eating and drinking and toasting your knees by the fire. So that's my first word. And tell us, captain, if there's anything else you want, and if the house has got it, it's yours, and heartily welcome."

"Yes," answered the captain, "there is one thing."

"And what is that?"

"I suppose you've got psalm books here?"

"To be sure we have."

"Very well, then; let me have some."

This was an odd request. The maids and men looked at each other with suprise; but the tall, grave captain, standing in the midst of the kitchen, repeated his request, and Martha ran off to fetch the books.

"It is just this," said the captain, "mates all! I suppose when we were being driven right on to the cliffs, there was not one

MARTHA RAN OFF TO FETCH THE BOOKS.

among us who had a mite of hope in him ever to see another day. When the *Martha*——"

"The *Martha!*"

"Yes, that's the name of my ship—that is to say, the name of my boat that is now gone to pieces. As I was saying: when she run aground and we looked up at the great wall of rock above us, where was not a step on which a foot could stand, then, I say, mates all, there was not one among us thought there was a crumb of chance for any one of us to see our homes and friends again. Now, I'm well assured that there was not one of us as did not as best he could raise his soul to God and ask of Him forgiveness for any wrongs he had done, and mercy when he came through the watery grave to stand afore His throne. Then, mates, when we had no hope at all, and no thought, save of judgment to come, down

on us from above came swinging that rope with a spar to the end, by means of which we might be saved, and I am pretty certain, that in our hearts, one and all, we prayed to God of His love to help the efforts made by them ashore to save us, and to bring us out of death into life. And again, mates, when we was swarming up that rope, and knowed that all depended on its few strands that might be sawn through by the sharp rocks, and on the power of some strong hands to hold it in a very difficult position, and to a bar of iron stuck into soft soil sodden with rain :—then, mates all, I am sure, as we was a scrambling up, that one and all we prayed to God to bring us safe to the top, to keep the cable from rending, and to hold the crowbar firm, and to strengthen the arms of them that clasped it. That's so, mates all." The captain paused, took the psalm book presented to him by Martha Gilbert,

and opened it. "I hold that, as God Almighty has heard our prayer, and has saved every one of us—every one of us—without hurt, has heard our prayer we put up to Him in danger and in the agony of

death—that we owe to Him a first duty, and that first duty is to *thank Him.* When one man does a kindness to another, helps him —the least he can do is to say, 'Thanky kindly;' and I am certain sure, as I stand here, that the Lord Almighty expects of every

man to whom He has shown goodness, to say 'Thanky kindly,' for the same. So now let us, as a first duty, give praise and glory to Him as has saved us in our sore distress. Sing wi' me, mates, 'Through all the changing scenes of life,' and after that you can put on dry things, and eat a good supper and be happy with them good and kind folks as has received us."

Then he raised his voice and began—

"Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ."

The strong voices of the men joined in. The Gilberts were all singers, and loved music. First old Gilbert threw in a bass, and then Sam's mellow tenor came in. At the next verse Martha and the maids were also singing.

"O, magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt His name;
When in distress to Him I called,
He to my rescue came."

Not one could conclude that verse; the voice of the captain shook. Then the sailor boy broke down and began to sob; and at once all those lusty, gallant fellows, who with bold faces had faced storm and death, yielded, and the tears ran down their cheeks. It was so true—so true to the letter. When in distress—the sorest, the most hopeless distress, to Him they had called, then had He in a marvellous manner come to their rescue.

In vain did the captain endeavour to command his voice sufficiently to continue the psalm, he could not.

"Never mind, mates," said he; "He that sees the heart knows we be thankful indeed.

That will do; we've done our first duty and said 'Thanky kindly,' and now that I've thanked Him, I give best thanks to all the rest."

CHAPTER IV.

PEACE AFTER STORM.

A DAY of perfect loveliness succeeded the storm. The sea was still in agitation. The coast still wreathed in foam, but the sky was blue and almost cloudless, and the earth, the hedges, the grass, twinkled as though strewn and strung with diamonds. The air was soft and warm as the breath of a little child, and the sun made the moistened world steam under its hot rays.

The first visit was made to the scene of the wreck, but not a trace of the vessel remained. Then the little bay to the west,

Porth Mawgan, was explored, not a timber of the *Martha*, not a scrap of her cargo had been washed ashore on the sands there. The current, the drift of the waves, had swept what floated further up the coast. In the valleys, where Cornish elms grew straight as poplars, lithe as whips, the roads were strewn with twigs and dead branches that eddies of wind had broken off the trees. The streams were full to overflow, and boiled down in their headlong career from the highlands to plunge into the turbulent ocean. The cattle that had stood shivering and motionless under hedges where there was shelter from wind and rain, had come forth, were lying down in the sun and chewing the cud complacently. The birds were about in good spirits, chirping and chattering, and the children swarmed about the cottage doors rejoicing in the change no less than did the birds.

Captain Thomas, of the *Martha*, the vessel that had been but was no more, was a tall man, of about thirty, with a bronzed face and rich chestnut beard. He was a Cornishman, a native of Penzance, and his vessel traded with Bristol and Bridgewater, from the latter he brought earthenware, ovens, and tiles. The vessel had been his own property, almost his all had been embarked in her, and now that she was wrecked and gone to pieces he had very little indeed left him. He was a single man, and that, as he said to himself, was fortunate, as the loss fell on himself alone and touched no others.

Captain Thomas, when he returned from searching for some remains of his vessel, found Martha Gilbert in the court seated in the sun drying clothes. She had a tray by her on the bench; as soon as one article was dried she laid it on her right side; those

that had to be done were on her left. She had picked a monthly rose, that flowered up to Christmas against the wall, and had pinned it in her bosom. That rose-tree throve, and it was nourished by all the soapsuds of the house. After every washing-day Martha and one of the maids carried out the washing-trays and poured the soapy water over the roots, splashed it over the buds to kill the green fly; and that rose-tree liked soapsuds as a child likes its cake and a man his tobacco. It was grateful for its soapsuds, and would have bloomed in January and February, but that it had to be pruned back, so luxuriant were its shoots.

"You are fond of flowers?" said Captain Thomas.

"Yes, especially of this rose. It was planted by my mother; she brought it here when she was married, and it has thriven. It is and will be a constant reminder of what

you said yesterday. The rose is well treated, and is ever thankful."

"May I sit by you?"

"Certainly, if you will do me the honour. It is pleasant in the sun, especially in November, when we have so little of it."

Martha moved the clothes away on her right, to make room for the captain. He took the place she had made for him.

"You have been long here?" asked Thomas.

"We—Oh yes. My grandfather was at Trenance before my father, and his father before him. If you look over the door, you will see 'A.G., 1682.' That means that the house was built by Adam Gilbert."

"Then the farm belongs to you?"

"No." Martha shook her head. "It did at one time. Adam Gilbert built the place on his own land; but a bad time came. It was not the fault of the time, it was the fault

of the man. My grandfather was quarrelsome, and loved a lawsuit; about next to nothing, he fought one neighbour, the Cayzers, over a right of way, a church path—not that he ever went to church himself, but he said, should the mind take him to go, he'd like to go the way he'd a right. Well, he carried the matter through one court after another, and he broke down stakes and railings Mr. Cayzer had put up, and was sued for damages, and once it came to blows, and he nigh on killed Mr. Cayzer, and the end of it all was the farm was sold. Squire Williams bought it, but he let grandfather remain on, and my father has stuck here, and, please God, my brother Sampson will also. We sincerely love the place, wind-blown though it be. 'Tis said that old Adam came here and he enclosed what was then a breezy down, and he and his descendants made it. It is a pity when one man throws away the

fruits of the labour and love of generations before him. My grandfather did at last go along the church path he had fought for, and that was in his coffin when he went to be buried."

"Ah! If he'd gone there earlier and gone there oftener, he would not, perhaps, have been so quarrelsome."

"I dare say you are right," said Martha; "but he was a man who never got on well with any one. I believe he did go to church once, but quarrelled with the parson because he began, 'When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness,' just as he came in at the door, and he declared the parson looked off his book and looked at him when he said it—and that he protested was an insult he would not stand, so he went and joined the Wesleyans. But he quarrelled with them because he wasn't made enough of, and he said he could buy all the lot of

them; and so he off and joined the Particular Baptists, but he got cross with them, and joined the Independents; and then, after many changes, he founded a sect of his own, to which he could not get any one else to belong; and he said that no one could be saved out of his sect, and so that he himself was the only man who would be saved. I really ought not to tell you all this about our grandfather, but father holds it up to us as a lesson."

"It is a lesson."

"Yes—not to quarrel over trifles."

"You—you do not belong to your grandfather's sect?"

"Oh dear no; it expired with him. We are Church folk."

"I'm glad of that," said Captain Thomas. "Wesley was a good man, and he founded the Methodists, and Calvin founded the Calvinists, and your grandfather founded the Gilbertists, but Jesus Christ founded the

Church, and that foundation alone standeth sure."

Neither spoke for a few minutes.

Presently Martha looked up with her sweet face full of pity, and said, "I am afraid you have had a great loss."

"My *Martha?*"

She started, coloured, then recovered herself. "Yes—your ship."

"She was the *Martha*. Yes, in her I have lost everything. I had but my life. I am thankful for that being saved."

"And the men?"

"They have lost nothing. They had no shares in her. They were hired by me, and will get engaged elsewhere."

"And you are the great loser?"

"Yes, I am the great loser."

"What will you do now?"

"There is but one thing I can do: I must serve as a common seaman."

"Oh, that will be a terrible come-down for you."

"Of course it will. But it cannot be helped. I am thankful my life was preserved."

"You cannot buy another vessel?"

"No. I have a few pounds laid by, not many—not enough for me to buy another boat. I had not the capital originally to buy the *Martha* right out. I borrowed what was needed, and I have now, I am glad to say, repaid all that, so that those who lent me the money are no losers."

"So you alone are the loser," said Martha Gilbert, meditatively. "But suppose that some one else should lend you the money?"

"Then I would be very happy, and build another boat. But I don't think it can be, not till I have something of my own to put to it. You see, they ask rather heavy

interest. I don't blame them—the risks are great."

"But if you had the money at a moderate interest?"

"If—exactly—if I had—it would not be long before I had another *Martha*."

"Why a *Martha?*"

"It was the name of my sister, to whom I was warmly attached as a child; she died young, before she was sixteen, of decline. The name has always been very, very dear to me."

Suddenly he turned round, looked at the sweet girl at his side—"You, too, are a Martha."

"Yes; and a Martha shall help you to another *Martha*," she said, smiling. "You will not mind letting me assist you? My mother left me a little money, a few hundred pounds. It happens that just now the investment in which they were has been paid

off to the bondholders, and just now I was wondering what to do with my money. Yes, you shall have it. I will trust you with my little inheritance; but only on this condition, that the new ship is to bear the same name."

Captain Thomas started up—he clasped

her hand. "You are too good," he said. "Yes, I accept your offer. I called my first boat after my dead sister, and she is gone. I call my second after a living girl; and, Martha Gilbert, whenever I sail by this point, I'll run up my colours and salute."

"It is fortunate," said Martha. "My

sister Tryphie is away on a visit at Bodmin —her little moneys are in a security still; mine, just in the nick of time, are here, in the house. I was paid back my few hundreds only yesterday. They are at your service. They are in my desk in Bank of England notes."

CHAPTER V.

SANDY STOUT.

CAPTAIN THOMAS walked away. Martha remained where she was, looking before her into the sunlit west, with a smile, and the pleasant dimples that made her smile so engaging playing about her lips. She was happy. She was able to help a worthy man in his difficulties, and serve him; it pleased her to think that this man was Captain Thomas.

For some minutes she sat with her hands in her lap, looking dreamily before her, lost in her thoughts. Then suddenly she roused herself, brushed together the garments she

had dried, took them in her arms, stood up and turned to enter the porch.

To her surprise she saw there seated one of the sailors who had been rescued from the *Martha*, a man who had given his name as Alexander Stout, but who called himself Sandy, and his mates did the same. He was a good-looking young man with dark eyes and hair, a swarthy complexion, a well-shaped nose and mouth. Altogether an engaging youth, and the servant girls in Trenance had already singled him out as just the sort of chap a maid would like to have as a sweetheart.

"Have you been long here?" asked Martha, shortly.

"Ay, miss, long enough to hear your liberal offer; and I think it a pity you didn't ask my opinion first."

"I do not ask it even now," said Martha. "Your listening was a bit of impertinence."

"I was sitting here in the porch—I did not think that you and Captain Thomas had anything to say to each other so mighty particular."

"No—I dare say not. We had not."

"Only to offer him some hundreds of pounds. I wish that offer had been made to me instead. Bless you—he ran the ship ashore on purpose."

"How can you say that?"

"It's true. To get the insurance. Bless your simple heart, he won't lose by it. The *Martha* weren't all that one might wish. He saw his way to a better business with a bigger ship, so he ran her in. Others have done the same."

"It's false!" said Martha. "He could not have done it. Why, he and you were nearly lost. Did he do it to commit suicide?"

"No, I won't say that. He miscalculated. He thought to run her up on the sands of

Porth Mawgan, and then he could have saved his life, if he lost the vessel; but in such a gale you can't aim just where you would like—you must go where the wind and the waves take you. So he wished to run ashore and wreck her, but he missed the port, and nigh on got drowned, me and all with him. I don't thank him for that."

"Are you sure she was insured?"

"Of course she was, and her cargo too."

"I do not believe it. I cannot believe it. I will ask the captain himself."

"Do; and he will deny it. Of course he will. For a few hundred pounds I'd do the same if I had the chance."

Martha, with her cheeks aflame, thrust past him. She did not believe what he had said. She was sure Captain Thomas was not the man to do such a thing. Her reason told her that in such a gale it would have been madness for any man to wilfully wreck his

vessel. Those who desire by these means to rob insurance companies choose still weather. But the words the young sailor had spoken worked like a worm in her heart, fretted her peace of mind, made her blood flush in her temples. She was very angry, but also very miserable. It seemed as though a cloud had come over the sun, and taken the brightness out of the day.

But she had no time in which to worry over her thoughts. The sailors had to be fed. They would dine in the farm and then disperse. There was no occasion for them to remain there. Moreover, her younger sister, Tryphena, was expected. She was away on a visit, but returned that day to St. Columb, and the trap her father would drive would take Captain Thomas away and bring back Tryphena.

Somehow she was now particularly anxious to be rid of the men before the arrival of

Tryphena. Not of Captain Thomas—not of the boy—no, only for the sake of being rid of Sandy Stout. She had not particularly noticed him before she saw him in the porch, but that short interview had filled her with dislike for the man and mistrust of his principles. He who could impute evil to such a man as Captain Thomas must be bad at heart. He was handsome; there was no denying that. And Tryphena was rather giddy—a bit of a flirt—and had often to be called to order by Martha. Not that there was any real danger from Stout; only that, as Martha put it to herself, he was an odious man, and had best be out of the way.

All the shipwrecked men dined with the family at noon, and healths were drunk, and thanks again given, in a neat, straightforward speech, by the captain to Farmer Gilbert, for his readiness in coming to the aid of those in peril; to Sampson for his firmness in holding

the bar; to all the labouring men for their prompt and cheerful and efficient help; and, not least, to the fair sex—to Miss Gilbert and the maidens of the house, who had done their best to recover them from the effects of

the exposure to which they had been subjected, and to cheer their spirits by their bright smiles and kindly words. To which old Gilbert responded. When he sat down, he turned to his daughter and said—

"Martha, I reckon I shall want you to drive the captain to St. Columb, for the red cow Speedwell has calved, and Sam and I must bide here."

Martha coloured slightly, and then responded that she was ready to do as bid.

She accordingly drove Thomas off as soon as dinner was over. He wanted to catch the van from St. Columb, so as to get down to Penzance as soon as possible.

"Was your vessel insured?" asked Martha.

"Insured? No. I wish she had been. I don't fancy many of our little ketches are that. No; I wish she had been. The loss would have been less to me; but then," he added, turning to look at his driver—"then I should not have had the honour and gratification of being indebted to you."

"The pleasure and honour are mine," answered Martha. "Fancy! A real ship called after me. It will be enough to turn my head."

So they chatted. Captain Thomas was in good spirits. He was beginning again, and beginning again under a debt; but it was a debt which brought with it rather pleasant thoughts than sense of onerous obligation.

As he said good-bye at St. Columb, somehow he retained Martha's hand in his, and hesitated. Something seemed to be fluttering to his lips that would not out.

"Now," said he, "when I have my new boat I will send you word, and as I sail by I will hoist a signal, and you must be on the cliff and wave a 'kerchief to me."

"Indeed, I will do so. But, Captain Thomas, you have not got my money yet."

"No. I do not want it just yet. It is safer in your care than mine. Besides, a formal agreement must be drawn up."

"Oh, surely there is no need for that!"

"Yes, there is. When that is made out I will send it you, and—if, when you return it

SOMETHING SEEMED TO BE FLUTTERING TO HIS LIPS THAT WOULD NOT OUT.

signed, a word from you accompanies it to say how you all are—how you especially are, and that you wish me success on my venture, then I shall be doubly pleased."

"You shall have it," said Martha, "but only on condition that a few words from you accompany the agreement, when sent, to let my father and brother—and all of us know, that you are well."

So they parted. Martha drove home. Not a word had been said by Captain Thomas expressive of more than regard and thankfulness, and yet Martha harboured in her inmost heart a conviction that he was not indifferent to her, and she was quite sure that she liked him better than any man she had yet seen.

When she came home she learned that all the men were gone except Sandy Stout, who had engaged himself to her father to work on the farm. He was a handy man, could

do carpentering, had been accustomed to cattle, had taken to the sea only recently, and desired to return to work on the land.

"Oh, Martha!" exclaimed her sister Tryphena, "what a good-looking man that is! What eyes he has! Who is he? He is quite the handsomest man I have seen."

Martha bit her lips. A fear of mischief came over her. She could not remonstrate with her father; he was an obstinate old man, and she could not give him her real reasons for mistrusting Sandy.

She went upstairs to her room, removed her hat and cloak, threw herself into a chair, and drew to her the desk in which she had put her little inheritance. To her surprise and alarm she found the desk open, the lock broken. She threw it open, searched it—the money was gone, not a note left.

In dismay she rushed downstairs.

"I have been robbed!" she said, as she entered the kitchen. "Some one has been to my desk and taken my money."

"Some one been to your desk, has there?" said Sandy Stout, who was seated at the table eating. "I'm not surprised; I always heard at Penzance that the fellow Thomas was light-fingered."

CHAPTER VI.

A CHALLENGE.

WHO had robbed Martha? In the first excitement caused by her discovery she ran downstairs and proclaimed her loss to all. She flew to her father and brother. They were disposed at first to discredit her statement. Who could have robbed her? It was not conceivable that there had been a man saved from the wreck so consummate a scoundrel that he would rob the house that had hospitably received him.

The farmer and his son would not suspect any of the men about the farm or the maids

in the house. They were sure that Martha had made a mistake. She had put her money somewhere else than she had supposed, for greater security, and then had forgotten that she had done so. The money was certain to be discovered after a few days, in some place of concealment, and then after having given a scare to every one in the house, she would be obliged to admit that her own memory had been at fault, and that she herself and no one else had put the money where it was found.

Martha protested that she had not taken her money from the place where first put to secrete it in any other. Why should she? She had mistrusted no one. Not a penny had ever been taken from her by the girls who had served in the house; they were honest as the day.

After a while the sincerity of Martha, and her perseverance in assertion began to really

alarm the old man. There was nothing for it, he said, but for every box in the house to be searched.

To this Martha could not consent. It was like casting suspicions, she said, on the servants, and she could not endure to seem to mistrust them, so faithful, good, honest they had always proved themselves to be.

"But then," said old Gilbert, "whom do you suspect? The money, you say, has been taken. If not by the servants, then it must have been carried off by one of the sailors from the wreck."

"No," said Martha, "I cannot think that."

"There must be a thief somewhere, either among the men whom we harboured, and who have departed, or among the farm maids or labourers."

"I do not believe the thief is to be found among either one or the other."

"Then whom do you suspect?"

Martha hesitated, looked down, and coloured.

"Well," said her father, "tell me if you have a suspicion. Out with it."

"There were but two persons who knew where my money was."

"And who were they?"

"One was Captain Thomas."

"What! you regard him as the culprit?"

Martha became crimson, looked up sharply, and said—

"No, indeed—indeed I do not."

"Then who was the other?"

"Sandy Stout."

"Sandy Stout! What makes you suspect him?"

"I do not say that I suspect him. But I mistrust him. I do not even assert that he knew about my money and where it was, but he may have known."

"But how should he and Captain Thomas know anything about it?"

"Well, father," said Martha, "it came about thus. I told Captain Thomas that I had some money which had been invested, and paid off; and that I had it in my room upstairs. I fancy I said where, and I told him I was looking out for a new investment, and that I did not see I could do better than lend it to him that he might get another ship, and then he could pay me interest on the loan."

"Oh, that was it. And did you offer it also to Sandy Stout?"

"No, father; but after I had been talking with Captain Thomas, I came to the porch. I had been on the bench under the hall window when I spoke with Captain Thomas, and there I found Sandy in the porch—it was most likely he had heard all that was said. I cannot tell. If he had been there

all the while, unperceived, he probably did hear, but if he had just come out of the kitchen, why, then, of course, I do not suppose he did. But you see, father, there is a chance that he may have heard, and I do really think, from his manner and from what he said, that he did hear. And then he is always trying to cast insinuations of evil on the captain."

"I do not think it probable at all that he has taken the money," said old Gilbert. "Put yourself in the place of a fellow who had. What would he at once want to do? Why, clear off as quick as heels could take him, to be sure. Instead of that, Stout comes to me and asks to be given work. He is a handy chap, he says, at all kinds of things. Now, that makes me say it can't be Sandy. It isn't in human nature it should be."

"I agree with you, father," said Sampson. "Sandy wouldn't be here now if he had

taken the money. Of course, we know nothing about the man."

"Nor does Captain Thomas," said Martha. "I happened to ask him, and he says Stout was a hand taken on at Penzance at the last moment, as they were short of a man, the one who was to have gone having fallen over a capstan and injured his leg. Sandy Stout is a stranger to every one. And now see what a predicament I am in. I offered to lend the money to the captain, and now I cannot do it."

"Well, he must do without—that is simple enough."

"Yes," Martha spoke hesitatingly; "but it seems so dreadful to offer a sum and then not to be able to give it."

"I don't see that. The dreadful thing is, that your money is lost to you—and not to Captain Thomas."

A tap at the door, and old Gilbert shouted,

"Come in!" The door opened, and Sandy Stout stood in it.

"May I have a word?" he asked.

"Come in, come in, man," said Sampson. "We were but just talking of you."

"I have come," said Sandy, "because of this unfortunate affair—this loss of a large sum of money. I am the only stranger here. It is not unlikely, therefore—it is, I should say, most likely—that suspicion rests on me. I cannot tell you anything about myself, but I can bid you search me—I give you full permission. Indeed, I entreat you to examine me—my pockets and all I have. As you know very well, I have no kit with me, and no chest. All I had was lost in the wreck. But I have my clothes in which I was saved, and my pockets in those clothes. I'll turn them out, and you can search me as much as you like. It will be a satisfaction to me if you will do so."

Old Gilbert and Sampson looked at each other.

"Come!" said the farmer, "I like that. It sounds all sense. What do y' say, Sammy, my boy?"

"Very well," said Sampson, "I will take you at your word, Stout. Come with me to the men's bedroom."

Sampson led Sandy from the chamber. A quarter of an hour passed before he returned, and when he did return it was without Sandy.

"It's all right," said he. "I took off all his clothes, and searched everywhere, and between linings and all."

"You searched all his clothes?"

"Yes, all. I made him take every rag off him except his stockings—I didn't make him take them off. I never heard of pockets in stockings, did you, father?"

"He may have hid the money somewhere else?" said Martha.

"I SEARCHED EVERYWHERE, BETWEEN LININGS AND ALL."

"Where? All the men and maids will have their eyes open. No," said Sampson; "indeed, he's as clear as I am. I shouldn't be so sure of Thomas."

Martha flushed. "He has been throwing out his ugly hints, and has infected your mind, Sampson."

Sampson shrugged his shoulders.

Foolish Sampson! But an honest farmer's son is no match for a rogue.

The lost banknotes were under the soles of Sandy Stout's feet, between them and the stocking soles, all the time that he was being searched by Sampson.

CHAPTER VII.

TO PENZANCE.

MARTHA was in considerable distress of mind as to what she should do. She did not relish the notion of writing to Captain Thomas relative to her loss. She feared lest he should suspect that she had repented of her promise to lend him the money, and had invented the story of her having been robbed to excuse her withholding it from him. She did, indeed, pen a letter, then tore it up and wrote another, but the second seemed to her as unsatisfactory as the first, and she felt that a personal interview could alone make her inability to fulfil her

engagement intelligible to him, without leaving the sting of the thought that she was untruthful relative to the money.

She had a cousin in Penzance, and wrote to her asking to be received at her house for a night, as she had some business to transact.

When her cousin expressed readiness to receive her, Martha started on her journey. She purposed to be back before long; indeed, she could be ill-spared from home, and, moreover, little desired to be absent whilst Sandy Stout was there.

From St. Columb she took the waggon, or van, to Truro, whence she purposed coaching to Penzance. The way was long, and the conveyance slow; but there was no help for it. This was the only means of communication at the time of which we tell. Slow and tedious though these journeys were, they were not without their advantages. Many

a pleasant acquaintanceship was made, and there was many a merry hour spent in jokes, and song and tale, and many a match for life was concluded between young people who began the journey together in the slow, crawling country waggon, and who got to know something of each other's tempers, endurance, and moods of mind, before the waggon reached its destination. These waggons tried tempers and agitated minds not a little. The carrier's horses moved slowly, the passengers were required to walk up all the hills, and sometimes to walk down as well. One disagreeable passenger was liable to ruffle the moods of all the rest. Accidents happened, a horse went lame, a wheel came off.

The delays at the public-houses were interminable, and the public-houses were innumerable. Passengers' luggage took long to pack, and, when packed, was often jolted out

of position and fell on the road, or bounced about among the passengers' bodies, bruising and wounding them.

The day was wet, and there were few travellers when Martha left St. Columb. In the waggon there was but one silent woman, who absolutely repelled all attempts at conversation.

"This is dreary weather for a journey," said Martha.

"Humph! might be worse."

"I hope I'm not incommoding you with my bag?"

"Humph! yes."

"Where can I put it out of your way?"

"Humph! on your lap."

"Excuse me, it is too heavy; I cannot carry it there on a long journey."

"Humph! It's a wicked world!"

Just outside of the town a sea captain got into the van, or rather, planted himself on

the seat with the driver, and did not penetrate to the dark depths behind.

Then, at a corner a few miles further, the

van was arrested by a call of "Ship ahoy!" and in tumbled another seafaring man, and perched himself beside the other.

The two men of the sea soon became ac-

quaintances, and confided to each other their affairs; beginning with infancy, and carrying on the story to age, they narrated to each other most of the affairs of their lives without much reticence—with, it may be said, none respecting facts that did them credit—holding back only such facts as might damage the high standard of excellence each felt he ought to exhibit to his fellow.

One was called Captain Jack and the other Captain Bill.

That is to say that Jack and Bill were their Christian names, what their surnames were did not transpire.

As all attempts to draw the silent woman into conversation failed, Martha had nothing else to amuse her but listen to the conversation of the two seafaring men.

"Whence be you, Captain Jack?" asked Captain Bill.

"Padstow, cap'n."

"And what be you a doing at Padstow?"

"Well, now, to tell y' the truth, and not a touch of a lie in it, I've been to see whether it would pay me to bring there a shipload of cloam (earthenware) ovens from Bideford."

"And will it?"

"Well, I'll try. But I'm not sweet on that North Cornish coast, I can assure ye. I got wrecked there once."

"Did you now, Cap'n Jack?"

"Yes, I did, Cap'n Bill, and in the beautifullest weather too."

"I wouldn't have said that."

"But I do. 'Tweren't my fault. It was one of the very curiousest concerns I ever knowed. And I don't understand the sense of it yet. It was a fine May morning, just about sunrise, and no breeze partic'lar, and I was in my crib as fast as I could be. I reckoned there was no danger, nor was there. I had been up all night to daybreak, and

though we was coasting, still any man with eyes in his head and brains in his noddle could have steered and done right. And yet —sure as a gun—we was run ashore."

"And you can't account for it?"

"I can account for it, of course, in a fashion. I knowed it was the fault of the steersman and another chap as were on deck. They seed the shore, and it's my belief that they made deliberate for it, and run my pretty little vessel, the *Midge*, right on to the Cow and Calf."

"And where's that?"

"Off Porth Quin. I had no suspicion of mischief till we were on, and a hole tore in her bottom, and the water rushing in like a mill-race. It was a flowing tide."

"Off Porth Quin! Why, what took you there?"

"I wasn't going there—I was for Bideford; that's just it, with a spring morning sunlight,

and a steady breeze, and a running tide, we went ever so far out of our course, and waked up to find ourselves wrecked, ay—and more than that—in the hands of wreckers."

Captain Bill whistled. "That's as bad as falling into the hands of lawyers or doctors. And I suppose you'd something to say to the chap as threw you on to the Cow and Calf?"

"There again," replied Captain Jack, "I was fixed up in a difficulty. The chap and his mate had taken the boat, and left the vessel before she ran on the rocks, and I never had the chance to give him a bit of a rope as I'd have liked."

"Who was he?"

"It was a chap I'd picked up. He seemed a good enough sort of a sailor, knowed all about the sea, and managing of a vessel. I don't mind saying it, but it's my belief, and no amount o' rubbing would get it out o' me, that that chap and his mate were hand in

hand with the Porth Quin wreckers, and that they throwed my pretty boat away o' purpose."

"What was his name?"

"Something like Saunders."

Captain Bill shook his head and sat ruminating.

Presently he turned to the other captain, and said, "Now, it's a serious bit of experience, it is; but I very near had the same game played on me, and much about the same place. I were bound from Bordeaux to Bristol. I'd wine aboard. Afore I sailed I took in a chap—I forget his name, but it wasn't Saunders—that was at St. Ives, my place. I was short of hands, and I've a very good customer at Bristol, for whom I've often been a trip to Bordeaux. I had an order, and was short of seamen, and so I took on a fellow I knowed nothing about, as offered. He was a tidy, smart sort of a chap, dark

as a Spaniard a'most—bless me, whatever was his name?—I'll tell you now—it was Sturt. No, it wasn't, it was Stout."

"The chap I tell you about was dark, but his name was Saunders."

"Well, Cap'n Jack, this fellow was all right and square, and I rather took a fancy to him. And all went smooth enough till we passed Scilly, and then were making for the Channel, and sighted Trevose. Then this fellow was mighty officious, and willing to take the night work off some of the others. But the mate he came to me, and he told me all wasn't right as it should be. This chap Stout had been tampering with one of the crew, and said that if they could wreck the vessel off Porth Quin, there'd be some pickings."

"And what did you do?"

"I had this man Stout up. I axed a question or two; he tried to pass it off as chaff and gammon. But I had him tied to the

mast, and gave him as good a hiding with a rope-end as you could have wished, and when I got ashore at Bristol, 'Now, my boy,' says I, 'I'm not going to pay you any wages, and summons me if you dare.' Well, I never heard any further of him from that day to this. I don't mean to say I was altogether easy in mind that I'd done the right thing. I didn't quite believe he really meant to persuade one of the crew to help wreck the vessel, but it was a sort o' joking I didn't stomach, and so I masted him as a lesson to be more partic'lar in future as to his jokes."

"You may depend upon it," said Captain Jack, "it was the same man, and if he'd a had his way, he'd a thrown your vessel away on the Cow and Calf, as he did mine."

CHAPTER VIII.

WITH THE CAPTAIN AGAIN.

WHEN Martha reached Penzance, after having settled with her cousin, she sallied forth in search of Captain Thomas. She had his address, and had no difficulty in finding his house. Every one of whom she inquired her way seemed to know Captain Thomas. He lived in a cottage near the beach, and the little house had a red geranium growing up over the face, as ivy or Bankshire roses might grow elsewhere. The geranium was a veritable tree, so stout was its trunk, and the red flowers were covering the whole house with

bloom. The window-frames were painted very white, the gravel path was without a weed, and the little house was as clean and bright as was possible. In it lived Captain Thomas and his mother.

Martha was fortunate—the captain was at home. His face brightened at the sight of her.

"This is a pleasure on which I had never reckoned," said he, holding out both hands in welcome.

"I am afraid I bring you anything but pleasure," answered Martha; "I am the bearer of very ill news."

"Nothing the matter with your father?"

"No, Captain Thomas, he is well enough, and so is Sampson—but I——"

"Surely nothing ails you?"

"You know the promise I made you—to lend you money."

"Yes."

"I cannot fulfil it—my money is gone."

"What, a bank broke?"

"My bank broken into. It has been stolen."

"You do not mean it?"

"You recall that I told you where it was. The shares in which my money was invested had been paid up—or whatever you call it; returned, you understand, so no longer wanted, and no interest given on it any further. I happened to have it all with me in my room. As we sat together that afternoon I told you so, and where I had put the money. Not long after that—it was gone."

"But surely you can find who took it?"

"We have searched——"

"Was it taken before our fellows left?"

"Yes; but I cannot believe any one of them so ill repaid what was done for them."

"No; I could answer for most."

"Not for all?"

"SURELY YOU CAN FIND WHO TOOK IT?"

"Not for all. There was one among us of whom I knew nothing."

"Sandy Stout?"

"Yes, Sandy Stout. He was a stranger, and taken on because my mate happened to be down with a bad leg, and so I was short of a man. He offered, and I took him, but I knew nothing of him—nothing against him. Whilst on the *Martha* he was well-conducted and a good seaman. Still, he's the only man about whom I cannot say that I am confident he is honest as the day. The others I have known for years, and would leave my purse out and be sure none of them would touch it. Still—understand, I know naught against Sandy."

"Do you know that Sandy Stout was in the porch and overheard what I said to you?"

"No, I did not know it."

"He is staying on with my father, to my

great regret. I do not like him. I mistrust him. He tries to throw suspicion on others, so as to clear himself."

"That looks bad."

"I can tell you something more." Then Martha related to Captain Thomas what she had heard from Captain Jack and Captain Bill.

He gave her close attention.

"Now, do you think he threw your *Martha*—I mean your vessel—away?"

"No," answered the captain decidedly, "certainly not. The vessel was caught by the gale and driven on shore. If there be any truth in the story that Sandy Stout wrecks vessels, he would not try to wreck one in such a storm, when only a merciful Providence and your brother Sampson could save our lives. A fellow who tries to run a vessel ashore so as to deliver her up to the wreckers would not choose such an occasion when he might be lost himself, nor such a

place where he had no confederates. Whatever he may have intended I cannot say, but of one thing I am quite certain, he had no hand in the loss of the *Martha*."

"Captain Jack said that the man whom he called Saunders ran his boat on the rocks at Porth Quin."

"Yes; and if he intended to wreck the *Martha* he would have wrecked her on the same rocks, but he had not the chance."

"Captain Thomas! you know now that it is not in my power to lend you the money I promised. I am very, very sorry. One reason why I came here was that I did not like to write about it, lest you should think I was trying to shirk out of my promise." She paused.

Thomas did not answer, as she had expected. She looked in his face. He was studying, and clearly had not been attending to her last remark.

Suddenly he started.

"I'll go and see Jimmy Johns. He acted as mate when Eph. Poldew was ill. Now I come to think on it, he threw out a sort of a hint that the fellow Stout was no better than he should be, and might just as well have been left to drown. I remember his saying on the morning after the wreck, that he was thankful for what was done—all but for one thing, and when I asked him what that one thing was, he said it was a pity that Sandy Stout had not been let go in the wreck, and sent to kingdom come. I know that at the time I rebuked him rather sharply, and he said no more. I'll go and see Jimmy Johns at once. He is in the town. It is possible he may be able to throw some light on the matter. How long are you staying here?"

"I wish to get home as quickly as possible. I am not easy away—and that fellow Stout in the house."

"HOW LONG ARE YOU STAYING HERE?"

"We must not condemn him without some better evidence. We cannot say for certain that he is the Saunders of Captain Jack, and that Captain Bill was justified in giving him a hiding for proposing to wreck his vessel."

"The description of the man answers exactly—black as a Spaniard."

"There are plenty of dark men in Cornwall. You have but to look about you here in the Land's End district, or about Veryan, and you will see them by scores—black as Spaniards."

Martha rose and left. She said no more about her promise to Captain Thomas and his disappointment. Although he dissuaded her from concluding that Sandy Stout was the same man as he of whom she had heard stories in the waggon, she could see by his face that he was uneasy and thought gravely of the matter. Late the same evening there was a knock at her cousin's door, and Captain

Thomas was ushered in. He looked graver than before.

"Miss Gilbert," said he, "when will you be ready to start for Mawgan?"

"To-morrow if need be."

"Then return to-morrow. I will go with you. I have heard something that makes it necessary for me to go with you, and to see Sandy Stout."

CHAPTER IX.

IN PURSUIT.

ON the following morning Martha was on her way home, and Captain Thomas accompanied her. They were on the top of the coach, the day was bright, and the air fresh. The coach was full within and without, and no opportunity was given Martha to inquire of her companion what he had learned relative to Sandy Stout. The subject was not one to be talked over in the hearing of their fellow-travellers.

When, however, the coach reached Truro,

and they dismounted, Thomas said to Martha—

"I must ask you to remain here overnight. I shall have to go to Falmouth. I wish particularly to see Captain Penaluna."

"But who is Captain Penaluna?"

"Your Captain Jack."

"You have discovered his name?"

"Yes. This is what I have learned: My temporary mate, Jimmy Johns, when I questioned him about his aversion to the fellow Stout, told me that he had heard from one of the men that he had been sounding him relative to the running the vessel ashore. He dealt in generalities, but hinted that his assistance would be well paid for. The man spoke to Johns—but then the storm fell on us and brought that matter to an end. However, since Johns has returned to Penzance he has been to see Eph Poldew, who was down with the bad leg,

but is now on the mend, and the two men in talking together came to speaking about Stout, and Jimmy Johns told my old mate about the matter. Then Poldew told him he had been once a cruise with a captain Penaluna, of Falmouth, and had been wrecked with him, and that there was foul play admitted of no doubt. The vessel had been thrown away in early morning when there was neither dirty weather nor a strong current running. Moreover, the rocks on which she was run were the Cow and Calf, outside Porth Quin. When I heard this I went and saw Poldew myself. He was able to describe the man Saunders to me, and I have very little doubt that this was Sandy Stout. The vessel, the *Midge*, was bound for Bideford, the captain was Penaluna—Captain Jack Penaluna, Poldew told me—and she was wrecked last May twelvemonth. He was able to give me the

captain's address, and now I go to seek him out. He can obtain a warrant, I have no doubt, and it will go hard with Stout when we bring so much evidence against him—for Penaluna will be able to find Captain Bill, without a doubt. I do not despair now, Martha, of our recovering your money. That is if we be expeditious, and you shall not wait for me after I have seen this captain at Falmouth."

"It is for your sake that I desire the recovery of my money," said Martha. "I have been so troubled to think that you would be disappointed."

"I should be disappointed at not having the money from you," said Thomas, "because I would rather owe to you than to any one else in the world. But I must say the truth. When my misfortune was known in Penzance, half a dozen came forward with offers to advance the money for another boat."

SHE SAT AT THE OPEN WINDOW.

"And you did not accept?"

"No; I wished to owe all to you."

"If we do recover the money you shall have it. It will be a delight to me to think that it is trusted to you."

Then Captain Thomas departed down the river to Falmouth, and Martha saw no more of him that day; but she sat at the open window of her room in the little inn where she lodged, looking down the blue waters of the lovely estuary of the Fal, singing to herself that Psalm which in her mind was associated with the thoughts of Captain Thomas—

"Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ."

Next morning Captain Thomas arrived. He brought Captain Jack Penaluna with him, and all three proceeded together towards St. Columb.

"I shall know him again? Of course I shall," said Captain Jack; "and if your man and mine are the same, I can always find Captain Bill, and between us we shall do for him, or my name's not Jack Penaluna."

When at length St. Columb was reached, to Martha's surprise she saw her father and brother outside the little inn at which, on market days, they were wont to put up their horse. Both were in great excitement, and were surrounded by several men, to whom they were talking.

"What is the matter, Sampson?" asked Martha.

"What! you back? That is well, Mart," exclaimed the old man, breaking off from his conversation. "What is the matter? Everything is the matter. That scoundrel, Sandy Stout, has bolted, and not gone alone."

"Who has gone with him?" asked Martha, her heart standing still with fear.

"Who? Why, Tryphie. Who else would be fool enough to go?"

"Oh, father!" Martha drew the old man aside. "Oh, father, why have you made this public?"

"Made it public! Of course I have. I want to know where the rascal has gone; what he has done with my child."

"But surely—for her sake——"

"For her sake?—fudge! She must be found. He must be found. We do not know where they are. Unless we ask, how are we to discover? They went off last night, and took two of the horses with them —the horses are gone, and Tryphie and Stout are gone, and we suppose it was in the night. We have inquired everywhere, and can hear no tidings. So we have come here. I thought here the folks might have seen or heard something of them."

"And I'll tell you what it is," said Sampson, who was as angry as his father, and who had also lost his head. "My belief is—that fellow stole your money, Mart, and he's gone off with Tryphena—not that he cares a snap for her, but he wants her seven hundred as well as yours. And I'll tell you why I think it. Tryphie sent a letter to the post at St. Columb the other day, and it was addressed to the broker in London who manages her money and yours. Now, what did she want to write to the broker for, unless it were to get him to sell out? I wish I'd torn open that letter. No doubt in the world she gave him the address to which the money was to be sent, and till we know that address, we do not know where to look for her and Stout. I came here to post a letter to the broker to stop the sale, if possible, and to learn from him what address was given. But whether he'll stop selling for my writing

I can't say. Tryphie has full right to her own money."

"Anyhow, we shall get the address," said the old man.

"But—it will be too late. I wish some one had seen the way they went. We don't know where to look. There's only one way in which we know they have not gone."

"Which is that?"

"Over the cliffs and into the ocean."

"They wouldn't have taken the horses for that," said Sampson.

"I can tell you their direction," said Martha. "But do come away from this cluster of men. There is no need having this terrible misfortune talked about all over the country."

"Talked about it will be—whether you like it or not, and do what you will to hide it. Every one at Trenance knows that Stout has carried that fool of a girl off, and

if it be known in Trenance it will be known at Mawgan, and if at Mawgan, then at St. Columb."

"Well," broke in Sampson, "where is she? What direction has she taken? No time is to be lost."

"You are right," said Martha. "No time is to be lost. You must go after them to Porth Quin. There is the place where they will be found."

"You are sure?"

"Almost certain. And Captain Jack Penaluna, he has a summons out against him."

"Heugh!" shouted the old man, running into the stable-yard of the inn. "Postboys —a carriage at once, and a guinea to each if you are ready in a quarter of an hour and out of St. Columb."

In less than a quarter of an hour the whole party, consisting of Martha, her father, brother, Captain Thomas, and Captain

Penaluna, were out of the little town, and were posting along the road to Wade Bridge as fast as the horses could be got to go. The old man would sit outside on the box, and urge the postboys on.

As they were whirling down the long hill into Wade Bridge, suddenly he gave a shout, and turned back.

"Look! here they come!" he cried. All looked out, and saw a couple of riderless horses trotting along the road towards them.

"Diamond and Whiteface!" said Sampson; "the horses they took. They have turned them loose, having no more need for them. They cannot be many miles ahead."

"And I'll tell you what," said Captain Thomas, "as soon as we get into the parish where is Porth Quin, we'll have up the constable, and give him the summons to serve on Stout, or Saunders, or whatever is his name—he shan't escape us all."

CHAPTER X.

PORTH QUIN.

THE carriage stopped at the "church town" of St. Endelion, in which parish Porth Quin is situated. From this point no carriage could be used, as the road was rough, over downs and through fields. Near the church stood a small village inn, and the taverner was also parish constable.

Old Mr. Gilbert went to the door, and Hocking, the innkeeper, who was cleaning out a pig-sty in the back yard, was summoned.

"Tell me," said the old farmer, "is there

a man of the name of Saunders, or Stout, or something of that sort, at Porth Quin?"

"Saunders — yes, there was," answered Hocking, slowly.

"Oh, a dark-haired, dark-skinned man?" asked the former.

"Yes—dark-grained altogether."

"You say he was at Porth Quin. Is he not there now?"

"No. He was there, but he's now at Endelion."

"Where? When?"

"When? Why, let me see?" Hocking leisurely proceeded to ruminate. "You see, he had a daughter."

"I don't see that—he is a very young man. Was he married?"

"Married! Oh, of course he was. Married, and had a daughter. And she's married too —been married some time."

"Impossible! He's quite young."

Hocking shook his head.

"Come, we can't wait. Where is he?"

"In the churchyard. He died twenty years ago. He lived at Porth Quin, and when he died, they buried him in Endelion. I can show you his grave."

The farmer uttered an exclamation of annoyance.

"We are wasting precious time. We have a summons to be served. We want you with us. Is there a person called Stout at Porth Quin?"

"There's a stout person there—uncommon. Leastways within a mile, at Roscarrock, uncommon stout, and heavy; and she's a female."

"Now, look here," said Captain Thomas, "there is no time for nonsense. We are after a scoundrel who has run away with this old man's daughter; and we have a summons also to be served on the same man for con-

spiracy to wreck a vessel. Come with us at once, and arrest him. It is your duty."

Hocking looked slowly from Captain Thomas to old Mr. Gilbert, and then to Martha.

"Have something to drink?" he asked.

"No; we cannot wait. You must come immediately."

"I can't; I've been cleaning out the pig-sty."

"Leave the pig-sty. You must come."

"Now look you here," said Hocking, "I reckon that if I be constable of the parish, I represent his most gracious Majesty King George. Now, I can't go with you till I've changed my shirt. 'Twouldn't be respectable. I'll come when I've put on a clean shirt."

"Well, be sharp about it," said Thomas, angrily. "This is intolerable."

"Will you come in and sit down," asked

Hocking, "whilst so be as I'm changing my shirt?"

"No, thank you. We will wait outside."

Hocking went in.

"Excuse me," said he, "if I hasp the door. There's a lot o' wind blowing, and I might catch cold changing my shirt. You see, gentlemen, when the wind gets into the house it blows upstairs, downstairs, in the kitchen — I've known it blow a gale in the cellar, all because the front door was open."

"Go along, and be quick."

Mr. Hocking shut the door. In another moment Thomas saw a boy start from the back of the house, jump a hedge, and run as fast as his legs could bear him in a seaward direction.

He was uneasy, and, turning to Captain Jack Penaluna, said—

"If I'm not mistaken, this fellow Hocking

is in league with the wreckers and smugglers at Porth Quin, and has sent to warn them. I shan't wait till he has changed his shirt, but go."

"So will I," said Jack. "But I think Mr. Gilbert and Miss Gilbert had better follow with the constable."

"I'll go with you," said Sampson. "I believe, with you, that this fellow Hocking is purposely delaying us."

The old farmer stamped and stormed.

Presently the casement above the porch of the inn was opened, and forth peeped the innkeeper in unclothed condition.

"Where be the gentlemen gone to?" he asked.

"They cannot wait for you. Are you ready?" shouted Gilbert.

"Call 'em back, will you? They'll never find the way without me. I can take them a short cut across the country."

"Come down at once," called the angry farmer.

"I'm very sorry, I'm undressed. I did get out a shirt, but the collar waren't starched —not proper for me to appear in as representing his gracious Majesty. So I'm going to put on another. Call back those who have gone ahead. They'll go miles about without me, and lose their way."

"Not a bit," shouted Gilbert. "They've your boy to follow."

The innkeeper slammed the window, and was downstairs with astonishing expedition.

"What do you mean—my boy?" asked Hocking, coming out of his door.

"Mean!" repeated the old yeoman; "I mean this—that you have sent a lad across country to warn the fellow we are in search of to be on the look-out; and I tell you that this shall not pass unnoticed, if there's any justice and law in England."

"I know nothing of the boy," said Hocking, sulkily. "Come, if you want me to go with you—I am ready."

Porth Quin is a small harbour opening to the north-west, and therefore exposed to gales from that quarter; but across the mouth lie the Cow and Calf rocks, that in a measure break the violence of the seas that roll in. No more disconsolate, forsaken spot can well be conceived than is Porth Quin at the present day; and it was every whit as disconsolate and forsaken at the beginning of this century, in the reign of George III., the period of this story. It is said that at one time Porth Quin was a flourishing place, with many houses, the inhabitants being all seamen, whose vessels found harbour in this little rock-girt bay. But a fearful gale swept all the boats with their crews to destruction, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and so swept away the entire male population. From

that date to this Porth Quin has been a ruinous, lost corner of the world. There is, to the present day, no decent road leading to it; there was at the beginning of this century no road worth the name at all.

That this tradition of the decline and ruin of Porth Quin is not wholly unfounded may be judged from the ruins of houses there remaining, and from the excavated chambers in the black rocks that formerly served as pilchard cellars, and which are very numerous and extensive. Sampson and the two captains had outstripped old Gilbert and the constable, and when the latter, with Martha, reached Porth Quin, were not to be seen.

"There," said Hocking, "you are at the place. What more can I do?"

"I want to know where he is. I want to know where my daughter is," exclaimed the irritated and heated father.

"I don't know who you mean. As I said,

AN ELDERLY WOMAN CAME TOWARDS HIM.

the only Mr. Saunders is dead, and the only stout party is a woman."

"Come," said the farmer, "there are but three inhabited houses here. Let us search them all." He made his way to the first. The door was shut. He knocked, and received no answer. He knocked again, and then opened the door. An elderly woman came towards him. He asked whose house it was. She shook her head. "Was her husband—was her son at home?" She shook her head. "What was her name?" She shook her head.

"I reckon she's deaf and dumb—leastways it seems so," said Hocking.

The old yeoman went to the next house, and, thrusting open the door, went in. He saw no one, but heard sighs and groans proceeding from the room upstairs. Thinking that his daughter might be there, he rushed up, and found a woman seated on a chair,

with a shawl about her head, and her hand to her jaw.

From her no answer could be obtained to

any question he asked but moans and sighs, and exclamations of pain.

"Oh, sir, don't ax me no questions—I'm

cruel bad wi' the toothache. Oh dear! Oh dear!"

"Tell me this. Whose house is this? Have you seen my daughter?—a fellow named Saunders, or Stout, or Sandy Stout, or something of the sort, has carried her off—has brought her here."

"Oh dear! Oh dear! I know nothing. I have the toothache terrible bad."

"But I have lost my daughter. She has been carried off."

"I know nothing about it. Have you oil of cloves by you? Oh dear! Oh dear! my tooth is so bad."

The old man, angry and perplexed, after looking round in vain for any sign of Tryphena, or of Stout, went to the next cottage. The door there was open; it was alive with small children, and the mother was engaged in washing, running to and fro, now scolding and threatening the children, then attending

to the hot-water trays and soapsuds and clothes. In vain did old Gilbert endeavour to get any information from her. The squealing of the children, the loud voice of the woman, her restlessness, running to and fro, interrupted and deafened him.

He was driven desperate. The constable stood, with his hands in his pockets, looking on, with a half-smile on his lips and a twinkle in his grey eyes.

Then in came Martha, trembling with agitation, and pale with excitement.

"Father — quick — help! I have found Tryphie!

CHAPTER XI.

THE PILCHARD CELLAR.

WHEN old Mr. Gilbert had been in the first and largest of the inhabited houses—that in which was the old woman deaf and dumb—whilst her father was addressing and questioning her, Martha had watched her face and that of the constable, and she was convinced that a sign of intelligence had passed between them. There was something in the way in which he closed his eyes, then raised his brows, and moved his lips, that made her believe he was asking a question by sign, and when she saw an answering nod and turn of the hand

behind the body from the woman, Martha was convinced that the constable had asked her whether Stout was apprised and had made his escape, and that she had answered in the affirmative. Her father was too incensed and excited to observe this. He bustled about, prying in all directions, and continuing his questions although aware that the woman could not hear what he said. The old man was also conscious that the constable was endeavouring to screen the man whom he sought, and this consciousness, instead of making him more on the alert, confused him.

Martha was satisfied that no satisfactory results would be reached in the way in which her father was conducting his search, she maintained her self-control, and looked attentively about her. Then she thought she recognized a mitten, lying on a sideboard in the sitting-room. It was of wool, black, with

a lavender line round it. She could not be certain, for the pattern was a common one, still, she knew that her sister had a pair of mits of this description, and it was unlikely that another of exactly the same description should be there, the property of the deaf and dumb woman. She went to the sideboard and took it, but took it with an eye fixed on the woman, and she observed in her an involuntary start, and an expression of alarm in her eyes. Martha replaced the mitten with assumed indifference, and followed her father when he left the house.

But Martha, though she left the house, did not go with her father to the next house. She was certain in her own mind that the clue to the discovery of her sister was in her hands.

When they were on the doorstep, the deaf and dumb woman, with an angry expression, slammed the door upon them and turned the

key in the lock. Martha was convinced that she heard her muttering some words to herself within, as she turned away. If so, then

this woman was not deaf and dumb, as she pretended.

Instead of crossing the road to the rather large cottage, into which her father now

entered—that in which was the woman with the toothache—Martha remained behind, walked up the road and examined the house she had left.

She observed that it stood back against the black slate cliff, with a narrow yard behind it, dividing the house itself from the rock. There were various outhouses adjoining, and a pig-sty, and by the sty a little gate, the door of which was ajar. She considered for a moment, and then slipped through the door into the yard—not six feet wide; and then saw, what she had suspected, that in the face of the rock were excavated cellars like those she had seen in ruinous condition further down the road, in the face of the cliff, and these in the yard were furnished with doors that were locked.

Martha had lived all her life near the coast, and she knew but too well what was the meaning of these pilchard cellars. Osten-

sibly they served for the curing and storing of the fish caught, but they served another purpose, the concealment of smuggled goods. That coast with its many bays, so dangerous and so intricate, was as though made for smugglers, and a large portion of the population lived by the profession. There was a deeper depth of lawlessness reached by some men—they were wreckers, and combined wrecking with smuggling. If caught, they pretended to be salvors, and demanded salvage. If not discovered they appropriated to themselves all that they could take from a vessel cast on that inhospitable coast.

It was said, and said with truth, that many a vessel was either drawn or driven to ruin, drawn by false lights, driven by connivance of those on board with the wreckers on shore.

Martha could with confidence explore the yard behind the house, certain that she

would not be observed, for the woman's attention would be taken up with the proceedings of old Gilbert and Hocking.

Nevertheless she proceeded with caution. She looked at the cellar doors, of which there were three, all firmly barred and padlocked. These doors were low, and were not noticeable from without, in the road, as the outbuildings completely concealed them.

Where could her sister be ?

If the boy had given the alarm, Stout might have escaped over the hills ; but hardly Tryphena—she must be concealed somewhere in Porth Quin, if there at all. And if concealed there—was it with her consent ? Tryphena had indeed run away from home ; but would she willingly remain in hiding when she knew that her father and sister were searching for her ? Martha knew that Tryphena was a giddy girl, but also that she was not heartless. She had been induced to

leave her home, but her conscience was sure to speak to her after she had done so, and reproach her. Tryphena, if inconsiderate, was yet with a conscience, and conscience was certain to awake in her if it had been sent to sleep for awhile. Martha looked up at the house. Her sister could not be concealed there, or she would have heard the voices of father and sister, and would have revealed her presence; with the impulsiveness natural to her, she would have come forth, thrown herself into their arms, and then poured forth a torrent of excuse and self-justification. No, Martha was sure the girl was not in the house. Yet she could not be far off. Was it possible that she was hidden in some of the outhouses, or even in one of the pilchard cellars?

Martha did not wish to shout out her sister's name, lest she should attract the attention of the woman of the house, now

THEN SHE HEARD HER NAME CALLED.

engaged in watching the proceedings in the other habitation entered by Mr. Gilbert and the constable, and who, in spite of her pretence, Martha was convinced could both hear and speak.

Then she remembered how she had told her sister the story of the rescue of the shipwrecked men at the headland, and how that all had united, after they were saved, in an act of thanksgiving to Him by whose providence they were delivered, singing together the thirty-fourth Psalm. The story had made a great impression for the moment on Tryphena. Martha began to sing, in her sweet, pure voice, as she moved up and down in the yard—

> "Through all the changing scenes of life,
> In trouble and in joy,
> The praises of my God shall still
> My heart and tongue employ."

Then she heard her name called, "Martha!

Martha!" and she stood still. She could not be certain whence the sounds came. In a tremulous voice, she continued—

"O magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt His name;"

and she heard from within one of the cellars, a muffled continuation of the Psalm—

"When in distress to Him I called,
He to my rescue came."

Now Martha knew where her sister was. She rushed to the door and tried to open it. In vain. The lock was fast. Then calling to Tryphena to be of good cheer, she would release her, she ran in quest of her father.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PSALM AGAIN.

IN a few minutes Mr. Gilbert and the constable were on the spot, the latter coming leisurely, and endeavouring by various devices to disabuse the old man of the idea that his daughter could be concealed at Porth Quin, and to persuade him that Martha was labouring under a delusion in supposing she had heard her sister's voice.

But the old yeoman paid him no attention. He ran to the spot indicated by Martha, and began to wrench at the fastening of the cellar door.

Then out came the woman of the house, and, forgetting her dissimulation, burst into abuse and threats at the old man for invading her yard, and for attempting to break into her locked place.

"Look here!" said Mr. Gilbert, "I've a warrant to search for my daughter. I provided myself with that. But warrant or no warrant, I'll have this door opened. Come, the key, or I break the lock. My child is here, and have her out I will."

But the old man would not wait for the production of the key. With a piece of stone, he battered the staple till he had broken it down, and then the door flew open, and Tryphena came forth to throw herself into his arms.

And now her story came from her lips without reserve, though garnished with a good deal of self-exculpation.

Sandy Stout had laid violent siege to her

THE DOOR FLEW OPEN, AND TRYPHENA CAME FORTH.

heart, and had won her affections, or she supposed he had. He was a very handsome man, and she could not be insensible to his good looks. He had ingratiated himself with her by joking about Captain Thomas and Martha, and had sown in her seeds, not exactly of mistrust of her sister, but of disregard for her opinions and feelings. Sandy had put Martha in a ridiculous light as a believer in Thomas, whom he used all his wits in describing as a fool. So matters had begun between them, and it as speedily ripened into attachment. Sandy then represented to Tryphena that it would not be possible for them to be married with the consent of the father, as Martha was certain to interfere and prejudice the old man and her brother against him. There was nothing for it but for them to run away together during Martha's absence, and to get married as speedily as possible.

Sandy had next represented to Tryphena that they must have some money on which to make a start in life. He told her that Martha had offered her money to Captain Thomas to enable him to buy or build a new vessel in which to trade, and he advised and urged her to show the same confidence in himself. If she would withdraw her money from the funds or whatever investment it were in, he also with this money would purchase a ship, and do a splendid business. He told her his home was at Porth Quin, and that all he required to live in comfort was a ship, and to that her money would help him.

Tryphena was easily persuaded, and had written to the London broker to withdraw her money from the investments in which it had been placed, that she might have it for the purpose proposed by Sandy. The money, she directed, was to be sent to her at Porth

Quin, in the parish of St. Endelion, near Wade Bridge, North Cornwall.

She and Sandy had escaped during the night from her father's house, on a couple of the horses belonging to the farm, and had ridden the whole way. On reaching Endelion, however, they had dismounted and turned the horses adrift. Thus it was that the pursuers had met them, returning, according to their instinct, to their old stables.

The woman in the house was Mrs. Stert, not Saunders or Stout, and was the mother of Sandy, and she was neither deaf nor dumb. They had been alarmed by a boy arriving at full speed from St. Endelion, sent by Mr. Hocking, to warn Sandy that he was followed, and might be captured unless he made his escape. In alarm he had proposed to conceal Tryphena, and she had consented. He had fastened her in the pilchard cellar,

and then, as Tryphena supposed, had himself fled to be out of reach of those who were after him. She had remained for some time in darkness, or with only so much light as came in under the door, and had heard nothing. Then she had begun to wonder whether her father and brother had come after her, and she had begun to cry. She recalled how good to her they had been, how happy her life had been at home, and how ungrateful and unfilial her conduct now was. At the same time qualms came over her at the prospect of the future. She really knew nothing of Saunders Stert, with whom she had eloped, and certain words that had passed between him and his mother had roused in her the suspicion that he lived principally by smuggling, and that the inhabitants of the other cottages were in league with him. Not only so, but his mother had thrown out some question re-

lative to Thomas's ship, and she had acquired a suspicion, more dreadful than that of his being a smuggler, namely, that he was what may be called a professional wrecker; that he had deliberately gone among the crew of the *Martha* with the purpose, if he had the chance, of running her on the rocks at the mouth of Porth Quin, so as to give her for a prey to the inmates of the three houses in the little colony.

Whilst thus brooding over her fears, Tryphena heard her sister's voice—there was no mistaking the voice—and the Psalm she sang dispelled any little doubt she might have entertained whether the singer was Martha. Her conscience had spoken, and she had answered, and by answering betrayed her place of concealment.

Tryphena had hardly concluded what she was saying, before a man came in with a

letter. He had brought it on from Wade Bridge, where it had come from London, directed to Miss Tryphena Gilbert, at the house of Mrs. Stert, Porth Quin. It was registered, and must be delivered into the hands of the person to whom addressed.

It was the answer from the broker in London, and the letter contained an order on a Cornish banking company for nearly seven hundred pounds.

"That's well," said old Gilbert, "we've saved that as well as you, Tryphie, from falling into the hands of a great rascal. But who comes here?"

They saw Captain Thomas and Penaluna and Sampson approaching carrying some one.

Then a cry from Mrs. Stert, she rushed to meet them, uttering a wail of dismay and grief. The three men were carrying her son.

Happily they had gone at once in pursuit, after the boy despatched by the constable,

HIS FOOT HAD SLIPPED, AND HE HAD BEEN PRECIPITATED TO THE SANDS.

and had not waited for him to put on a suitably clean and starched shirt. By this means they had got close to Porth Quin before Sandy started to escape, and they had been able to give him chase over the downs, keeping him in sight along the cliffs. He had doubled and dodged to throw them out, but they had closed in on him and driven him towards the edge of the headland that forms one horn of the Porth Quin bay. Then, to escape them, he had endeavoured to scramble down the cliff; but, when half-way down, his foot had slipped, or a stone had given way under him, and he had been precipitated to the sands. When the three men descended and reached him they found him not insensible, but with a dislocated and broken thigh, and with an arm and probably a rib broken—a shattered wreck. They were now carrying him to his home. When they reached the house they laid him on his bed.

He was groaning and in great pain. But he turned to old Gilbert and Martha and said—

"I have wronged you—there, leave me alone; here is your money. It is in my pocket-book—nothing missing—take it and forgive me—and go to Wade Bridge and send me a doctor."

That same night Thomas, Penaluna, old Gilbert, and his son and daughters, were assembled in Trenance. All the lost money had been recovered, and, what was better still, Tryphena had been rescued from a scoundrel.

"And now," said Martha, "it is my place to say that we have been delivered by a merciful Providence from a great disaster, the ruin of my sister and the ruin of our fortunes; so let us sing together, in token of our thanksgiving—

'Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.'"

THE END.

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